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China Lifts Ban on Imports of French and British Beef

Report Categories:

Trade Policy Monitoring

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Report Highlights:

During the week of June 24, 2018, China lifted its long standing ban on imports of beef from both France and the United Kingdom. France and China have negotiated an export protocol and France will be able to export beef once their plants are officially registered. The United Kingdom will still need to negotiate an export protocol. In response to the U.S. 301 Investigation, China has announced that effective July 6, 2018, U.S. beef could face applied tariffs as high as 50 percent, depending on the beef cut.

Summary

The United Kingdom has been banned from exporting beef to China for over 20 years and France for 17 years, following outbreaks of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in both countries. During the week of June 24, China has announced, separately, that it is lifting the import ban on both countries.

The United States regained beef market access to China in June 2017 after a 13 year ban. In response to the U.S. 301 Investigation, China has announced that effective July 6, 2018, U.S. beef could face applied tariffs as high as 50 percent, depending on the beef cut. Please see GAIN report [CH 18034](#) for more information about these additional tariffs.

On June 25, 2018, a protocol was signed by the French Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs, Jean-Yves Le Drian and the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC) Minister Ni Yuefeng. According to a press release by France's Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the agreement allows for frozen and chilled boneless beef that is whole or cut and is sourced from cattle less than 30 months old. Food grade beef fat is also eligible for export. From April 30 to May 9, China conducted an audit in France and the audit report was delivered on the day of the protocol signing. News reports cite that seven plants have applied for registration and it is expected that the first list of approved plants will be published soon. Depending on when the plants are listed on China's Certification and Accreditation Administration (CNCA) website, France could begin exports within the next few months. The French meat association Interbev expects exports to begin in September.

The United Kingdom announced on June 27, 2018, that China has lifted its ban on beef imports from the United Kingdom. According to a press release from the United Kingdom's Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the lifting of the ban is only the first step. The United Kingdom and China still have to negotiate the export protocol and British plants will then need to be registered. This announcement, according to DEFRA, is a follow up to a request made by the Prime Minister Theresa May during a trade mission to China earlier in 2018. Chinese officials also conducted an inspection visit in the United Kingdom in April.

With these additional market openings, 16 countries are eligible to export beef and beef products to China. France will be the fifth country eligible to export both fresh and frozen beef. Other eligible countries are:

Fresh and frozen beef: United States, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia

Frozen beef only: Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Chile, Uruguay, Mexico, Ireland, Hungary, Belarus, and South Africa